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SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/EGC LARSEN AND NELSON, AND S/SECC KASTENBERG

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SUBJECT: COPENHAGEN: EU AND MEMBER STATES TO ASSOCIATE AS BLOC

REF: STATE 03079

Econoff delivered reftel demarche on January 21 to Artur Runge-Metzger, Director for Climate and Air at DG ENV and the Commission's lead climate negotiator. Runge-Metzger said the EU and its 27 member states will associate with the Accord as a bloc. One letter will be submitted to the UN, signed by representatives of the Spanish Presidency and the Commission.

A draft letter was circulated to the member states for consideration on January 20, and ambassadors from the member states are scheduled to reconvene in Brussels on January 27 to formally approve the letter. After which, Runge-Metzger expects the letter to be deposited on or about January 29. He said the EU would inscribe its economy-wide target of 20% emission reductions by 2020 based on 1990 levels. Per the March 2007 decision of the EU's leaders, this target would be increased to 30% if "other developed countries commit themselves to comparable emission reductions and (emerging economies commit) to contributing adequately according to their responsibilities and respective capabilities."

Runge-Metzger welcomed the efforts of the U.S. to encourage countries to associate with the Accord by January 31 and said the EU was committed to this objective. Commenting on Yvo de Boer's remark that this is a "soft" deadline, Runge-Metzger said a firm cutoff could limit the number of states who associate with the Accord, fueling criticism about Copenhagen's shortcomings.

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